



Town of
Westford
Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

April 2014



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

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978-692-5500

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Massachusetts
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
RESOURCES

**WESTFORD
DESIGNATED 2013**

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www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

The Board of Selectmen recently thanked our Westford Police Officer Marc Proia for his quick thinking and heroic actions when he saved the life of a truck driver last month by moving the driver out of the path of his rolling vehicle with seconds to spare.

Our Annual Town Meeting was held on March 22nd with 456 citizens in attendance. You may view the results on our website at the following link: [2014 Annual Town Meeting](#).

As most of you know, on February 19th Pan Am Railways experienced a train derailment of between 12 and 15 train cars. No one from Pan Am notified the town of this accident, and no one from Pan Am has returned our repeated phone calls and emails. I reached out to our State and Federal Legislators to assist us, and I am pleased to report that a meeting is being scheduled in our Town Hall in early May. Use the following link to view letters and documents relative to this issue. [Pan Am Railways Documents](#).

On April 8th our Economic Development Committee hosted a gathering of local businesses to help them establish a Westford Business Association. This meeting was well attended with representatives from large companies such as Red Hat, Juniper Networks, Netscout Systems, UTC Aerospace Systems, and Kimball Farm - to much smaller companies such as Fashion Truck and Craft Beer Cellar. The goal of the association will be to represent all businesses and entrepreneurs in Westford, both large and small, and partner with the other Chambers of Commerce. Westford resident and Westford Rotary President Dan Bush has offered to organize this group, and committees were formed to address things such as charge, membership, bylaws, etc. Our hope is that this Westford Business Association will be ready to begin meeting in September. If you are interested in this venture, please email Dan Bush at dbush@lowellhabitat.org.



Above is a March 16, 2014 photograph of the Hubbardston Solar Project which is expected to be completed this summer. The town of Westford is the host customer of this facility and will purchase its solar net metering credits to reduce monthly electricity bills at town and school buildings.

(continued on next page)

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Firefighter and artist David Christiana appeared before the Board of Selectmen with Historic Markers he designed and produced which will be available for purchase for historic homes, buildings, and sites. He also presented a project to protect and enhance the Westford Knight. The board supported both requests and thanked David for his creativity and passion to preserve Westford's history.

Hollywood has returned to Westford as a movie "Tumbledown" is being filmed in Forge Village and in the Abbot Mill location.

On April 10th I joined nine other area town managers at the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce's annual municipal breakfast, where each of us presented a brief State of the Town report. It was my great pleasure to share all the positive things that are happening in our town with an audience of over 100 local business people and surrounding town representatives.

There are several openings on local boards and committees, including the Affordable Housing Committee, Agricultural Commission, Bylaw Review Committee, Communications Advisory, Cultural Council, Energy Committee, Historical Commission, Pedestrian Safety, and others, and I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees and if you have interest, complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link, or in the town manager's office: [Citizen Activity Form](#).



Photo courtesy of Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce

Also between April 13th and May 10th if you see a low flying plane it is likely the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) project to produce new aerial photography of our entire town. Imagery collected will be incorporated into our town's Geographic Information System (GIS). If you have any questions about this project please contact our GIS Coordinator Chris Coutu at 978-399-2533.



We were delighted to be included in the 18th birthday celebration of Thomas Pritchard in March. The celebration was held in Town Hall as Thomas proudly registered to vote in our Town Clerk's office. Congratulations and best wishes to Thomas and his family.

Enjoy these warmer temperatures - I know I am.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jodi Ross".

Jodi Ross



Recycling Commission News

Westford Spring Recycling Update

Spring is finally here – a time for new beginnings and new habits, and a perfect time to think about improving your recycling routine.

Is it time to upgrade your recycling bin to a 64-gallon wheeled recycling toter? They are available to buy as an option for Westford residents. Send a check for \$45 to the Westford Town Hall, 55 Main St., payable to "Westford Recycling Commission."

You may turn any barrel into a recycling container with a "RECYCLING" sticker, available for free at the Town Clerk's office.

Have you thought about composting your kitchen vegetable scraps? It's a way to lighten your trash load and ready your ground each spring with lush compost for the new season. Earth Machine composters are available for \$45 by calling **978-692-6986**.

If you'll be cleaning up your yard soon, plan to take your brush to the spring **Brush Chipping Event**, April 26, 10:30 - 4:30, at the Westford Highway Garage, 28 North Street, for \$10 CASH/load. For Westford residents only.



Spring flower photos taken by Kris Erickson



And one last tip – remember, if you're planting pansies and other flowers that come in plastic flower pots, they are recyclable if they have the recycling triangle symbol on the bottom of the pot.

For more information about recycling, visit www.westfordma.gov/recycling.

Happy spring!



Recycling Commission News (continued)

Build your own 'Litter League Green Team'

The Highway Department is providing the Green Team with kits and supplies needed to be successful. These kits contain enough equipment and supplies for eight volunteers, and can be borrowed from the Highway Department.

Litter League Kits include:

- Yellow bags for trash, clear bags for recyclables
- Eight safety vests
- Glo-pink flag tape to mark tires and other objects too heavy for volunteers to lift
- Eight metal grabbers for picking up the trash

The Highway Department will collect the full bags and flagged items left at the roadside by the Litter League Teams. So get your neighborhood together, or your child's scout troop or your club members, and pick some dates to borrow the equipment.

To sign up to borrow the kits, or to see what groups have scheduled the kits, go to the Highway Department website at:

www.westfordma.gov/highway and look for the [Litter League Link](#).



J.V. Fletcher Library



On Saturday, May 17 the annual, highly anticipated Westford Kiwanis sponsored Apple Blossom Parade will march along Main Street for the 46th time.

Traditionally, this is the event that the Children's Department of the J. V. Fletcher Library "announces" its theme for the upcoming Summer Reading Program via its parade entry.

It's so hard not to give you a hint, hmmm, we **do** expect to hear the following exclamations from the crowd: "electrifying!" - "oh, it's **The Friz!**" - "whoa, Out of this World" and "are those soap bubbles or some new kind of floating candy?"

- See you there!

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WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

Council On Aging - Coming Events

GAY NINETIES CELEBRATION

The Council on Aging is pleased to once again sponsor our annual Gay Nineties Celebration on Tuesday, May 20th from 10:30 AM – 2:30 PM at the Franco American Club. In celebration of Older Americans Month, this event honors those Westford elders who are ninety years of age and older. The afternoon will include a catered lunch served around 11:30 AM, along with raffles and entertainment. Advanced registration is necessary, at 978-692-5523 before May 10th. If you were born in 1924 or earlier, please indicate your birth date when registering so you can be acknowledged. Our honored Westford guests age 90 and over are welcome to bring one guest and they will be seated at your table. Transportation is available. This is open to all Westford Seniors. Non-residents may call to be placed on waiting list. There is no charge for this special event.

BREAKFAST

A healthy nutritious breakfast is now available Monday-Friday from 8:30 -- 9:30 AM at Cameron. The breakfast includes oatmeal, muffin, milk and juice.

Breakfast to go is also available through out the day by stopping at the front desk.

We ask that you sign in so we can track the usage.

Limit one breakfast per person per day.

LUNCH SERVED ON WEEKDAYS AT CAMERON SENIOR CENTER

The Merrimack Valley Nutrition Program provides anyone age 60 and over with low cost nutritional meals at Cameron, Monday – Friday at 11:30 AM.

Please call 978-692-5523 a minimum of two days in advance between 8:00 - 10:00 AM to make your reservation.

The donation is \$2.00. If spouse/partner is under the age of 60, the meal cost is \$4.50.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation offers various trips to local business establishments such as Market Basket, hairdressers, drug stores, department stores and medical facilities. Trips to Cameron Senior Center and social calls to your friends are also available. Please call 978-399-2322 or email lmitchell@westfordma.gov as soon as you know you need transportation. Roundtrip fares are \$3 within Westford; \$6 to neighboring towns; and \$8 to outlying towns. If school is closed due to inclement weather, transportation does not operate.

**To view the complete
Council On Aging Newsletter
please visit our website at:**

www.westfordma.gov/coa and click on [Newsletters](#).



Westford Senior Center

Veterans Services Department

Veterans Graves to be flagged

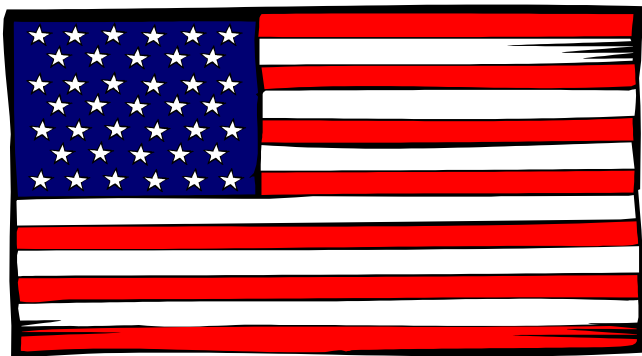
Prior to Memorial Day, American Legion Post 159 members will be placing American flags on each of the veteran's grave sites in our town's 7 cemeteries.

The joint effort of our town Highway, Parks, Recreation and Cemetery departments will place the American flags on utility poles.

Over the last year, we have made an extensive effort to identify every veteran buried in all of our cemeteries through the use of the Find-A-Grave website. The staff and a group of volunteers from the Westford Veterans Services office, the Westford Museum, the Westford Cemetery department and St. Catherine's Parish, as well as others have taken photos of the markers for each veteran we have been able to identify. In the next phases we plan on adding the GPS coordinates so a visitor would be able to quickly locate a grave site of interest. This is an ongoing effort of searching through the many records and identifying our Westford veterans, inadvertent omissions may have occurred which will be corrected as they are identified.

Our Town of Westford's Military Burial Index has been updated too, check it out at <https://data.westfordma.gov/vets>.

The Find A Grave links to Westford cemeteries are shown below.



WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV/VETERANS

Cemetery

[Fairview Cemetery](#)

[Hillside Cemetery](#)

[Pine Grove Cemetery](#)

[Russian Orthodox National Cemetery](#)

[Saint Catherine Cemetery](#)

[Westlawn Cemetery](#)

[Wright Cemetery](#)

Veterans Services Department (Continued)

Memorial Day 2014

Westford celebrates Memorial Day this year on Sunday, May 25th throughout many locations in our town. The day starts out by honoring those veterans who are now deceased in various memorials in the villages. Brief ceremonies will be held at Freedom Park, the Forge Village memorials, the Graniteville memorial and at the Bryne Ave. dam. Volunteer readers will read off the names of over 1000 deceased veterans who served with honor starting at 10:45 on the Common. A parade will commence from the Roudy and then around the common at noon with stops at the town center memorials to render honors by veterans and the service organizations that support them followed by representatives from our Police and Fire Departments, WA band, local government dignitaries and the ever popular Westford Firefighters Pipes and Drums. At the common with will be a memorial service in recognition of what Memorial Day is all about.

Please contact us if you are interested in assisting with our Memorial Day planning by calling 978-392-1170. More information at www.westfordma.gov/veterans



Health Department News

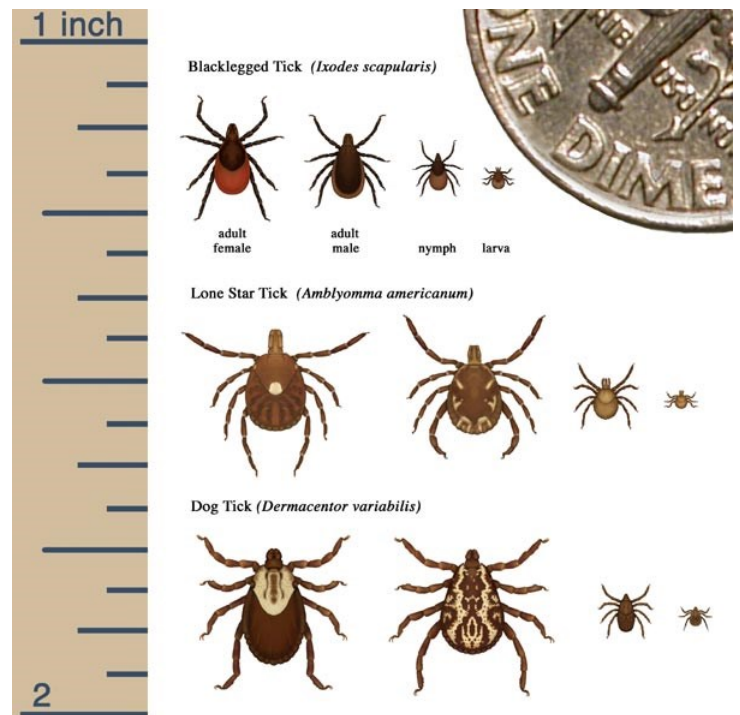
Free Tick Awareness & Prevention Workshop on April 30th

The Middlesex Tick Task Force invites residents to attend a "Let's Talk about Ticks" presentation to be held on Wednesday, April 30th from 7-9pm at the Lincoln Schools Auditorium (Ballfield Rd., Lincoln). This event will feature three presentations from prominent tick experts. Dr. Alfred DeMaria, Massachusetts Department of Public Health State Epidemiologist, will talk about Tick-borne Disease Awareness and Prevention and provide tips on how to protect you and your family from ticks. He will also introduce the audience to emerging tick-borne diseases such as Babesiosis and Anaplasmosis.

Kurt Upham, President of ohDeer, Inc., will present on Landscaping Ideas to Reduce Tick Exposure in Your Yard, including safe solutions for deer, tick, and mosquito control. Finally, Dr. Stephen Rich, UMass Laboratory of Medical Zoology will update the audience on New Tick Testing Program for Residents. If you have been bitten by a tick, depending on where you live, you may be eligible to submit the tick free or low cost testing to see if it carries the pathogens that cause Lyme disease, Babesiosis, or Anaplasmosis.

This free event is open to the public. For more information, please contact the Westford Health Department at 978 692-5509

Comprised of representatives from Acton, Bedford, Carlisle, Concord, Lexington, Lincoln, Waltham, Wayland, Westford and Weston, the Middlesex Tick Task Force formed in 2012. The group's goals are to increase awareness of tick-borne diseases in our towns, to educate residents about effective prevention measures, and to promote inter-town collaboration about these diseases in Middlesex County. The Task Force recognizes that tick-borne diseases are now endemic in our towns and that residents need information about effective prevention measures they can take to protect themselves, including knowing the signs and symptoms of disease, the life-cycle of the deer tick, how to do a "tick check" after being outside and to safely remove an embedded tick, and the importance of self-advocacy and early medical treatment for tick-borne diseases.



Health Department News (continued)

Parent Support Group

Please join us at our monthly Parent Support Groups, which started in Westford in April. Sessions are facilitated by Dianne Walsh, LICSW (Cognitive-Behavioral Therapist) and Sue Hanly, RN (school nurse/parent of a child with mental health issues).

The group is designed to offer both education and to form a supportive community for parents challenged with raising children struggling with mental health issues. Your neighbors, friends and others in town all have children with differences—come together and gain information and some skills to help your child.

The group is open to all—you do not have to be a Westford Resident.

Dates: April 15, May 13, June 10
Location: Millennium School (behind Abbot) in the Large All Purpose Room
Time: 7:00 pm -8:30 pm
Format: The first half will be educational and the last half will be to talk and discuss issues.
For questions, please call 978 692-5509

You may come to the entire group or come for just the educational or support section

April 15 - Emotional Regulation – teaching kids to deal with feelings— How do we teach kids to manage sadness, anger and disappointment without falling apart, without acting out, without turning on themselves? In this group we'll explore some options and share techniques.

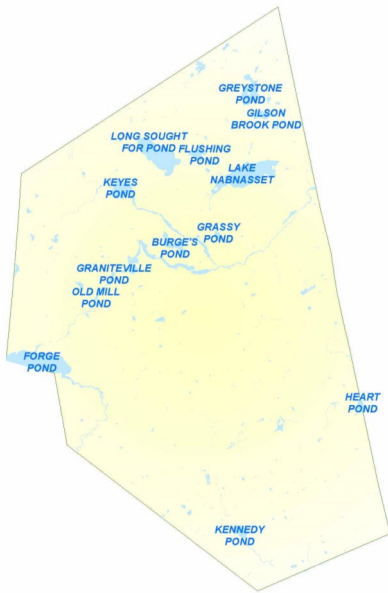
May 13 - Dual Diagnosis – mental health and substance abuse – How are mental health issues (especially depression) and substance use and abuse in teens related? Can you treat one without treating the other?

June 10 - Planning for a Successful summer .

SPONSORED BY THE WESTFORD HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Health Department News (continued)

Healthy Lakes & Ponds 101



Please join the Westford's Healthy Lakes and Ponds Collaborative & Health Department on Wednesday evening May 7th, 2014 from 7-9 PM at the Nabnasset Country Club located at 47 Oak Hill Road, Westford for an informative session focusing on how to keep our lakes and ponds healthy through education, prevention, and action.

In attendance will be Tom Flannery, an Aquatic Ecologist from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) who will be speaking on the importance of monitoring for the presence of exotic invasive aquatic plants as well as steps to develop a removal plan if infestations are found.

Also speaking will be Michael Celona, Chief of the Water Toxics unit of the Bureau of Environmental Health's Environmental Toxicology Program for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. His topics will include Harmful Algae Blooms (HAG), cyanobacteria, and their health

effects on people and pets.

More information on how you can be part of the solution to deteriorating water quality conditions can be found on the following websites:

www.mass.gov/lakesandponds

www.westfordma.gov/pages/government/towndepartments/westfordma_healthcare/hlpc

By being proactive and monitoring your lake or pond you are taking a key role in ensuring the protection of your water body and its associated water resources for the future!

National Drug Take Back Day

Co-sponsored by the Westford Police Dept., the Westford Health Dept. and the Drug Enforcement Agency, National Drug Take Back Day will be held on Sat., April 26, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Police Station Lobby. It is accessible from Town Hall parking lot, 55 Main St. This is a great time to clean out those medicine cabinets and get rid of expired prescription and over the counter medications. The Health Dept. will also accept, from Westford residents only, "sharps" (used syringes, needles, and lancets). Please ensure that all sharps are brought in a puncture proof container (such as a detergent bottle) and placed in the smallest containers possible. This will help minimize costs associated with disposal. Medications can be brought in the original container (with identifying information removed) or in a zip lock baggie. No cost.



Engineering Department News

The Town of Westford has identified the intersections of Dunstable Road and Groton Road, as well as Oak Hill Road and Groton Road, as two intersections that require updates and improvements in order to address operational and safety concerns. On March 31st, Westford officials from the Engineering, Highway, Planning, Fire and Police Departments conducted a Road Safety Audit (RSA) with representatives from MassDOT, NMCOG and TEC, Inc. at the intersection of Dunstable Road and Groton Road. The purpose of the RSA is to observe, identify, and report all safety issues and identify future opportunities for safety enhancements for all roadway users. This includes identifying both short-term and long-term safety improvements which can be implemented through general maintenance, immediate installation/removal, or could potentially be incorporated into the defined future improvement project. The RSA for Oak Hill Road was completed last year and several short-term improvements have already been implemented.



The RSA is also the first step in determining if the proposed improvements are eligible for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding. HSIP monies from MassDOT will pay for the construction of improvements that address known safety deficiencies at the intersection. Both intersections are strong candidates for HSIP funding since the crash rates are significantly higher than the statewide and district-wide averages for unsignalized intersections. These intersections are in the early stages of design and more news and information will become available later this year.

Water Department News

Hydrant Flushing Program - Spring 2014

As part of our ongoing maintenance program, the Westford Water Department will begin a comprehensive flushing program of the water mains, in the northern, Graniteville, and Nabnasset sections of Town. Flushing will begin Monday April 14, and we are anticipating completion on June 13, 2014. Flushing will be completed between the hours of 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM. This schedule is subject to change as weather conditions and length of flushing times may vary. Please check the website for updates (www.westfordma.gov/water).

Periodic flushing is performed to maintain water quality throughout the distribution system. This program involves opening fire hydrants and flushing valves to create increased water flows which dislodge and clean out naturally occurring sedimentation in the pipelines.

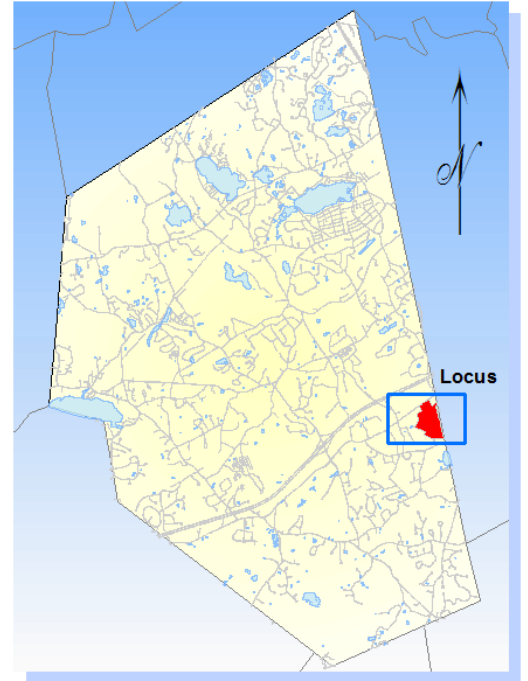


Minor flooding of streets, periods of low pressure and/or periods you may be without water could occur. Discolored water may result from the flushing so we recommend that you fill bottles with water for use during this time. If you experience colored water after the scheduled completion time, please run the cold water for 5 to 10 minutes to clear your service line. If your water does not clear or if you have concerns regarding this flushing please call the Water Department at 978-692-5529.

Please avoid washing clothes during the dates and times above. Westford Water Department reassures customers the water is safe to drink and any discoloration should clear up after the water is run a few minutes.



Recent Construction at Princeton Properties



*Photos by
Bill Turner*

